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IO/UNESCO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/18/2018

TAGS: PREL UNESCO JO

SUBJECT: UNESCO DG ELECTION DEMARCHE DELIVERED IN JORDAN

REF: STATE 130916

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4 b and d

1.(C) Ambassador delivered reftel demarche to Chief of the Royal Court, Naser Lozi, on December 18. Lozi clearly understood the reasons for U.S. opposition to Farouk Hosni's candidacy. He explained that Jordan recognized the difficulties that Hosni presented. At the same time, however, Jordan shared the aspiration of many Arab governments to see an Arab serve as the next UNESCO Director General. It would be difficult to dislodge Hosni as a candidate unless support for his candidacy was clearly waning.

¶2. (C) Lozi agreed to consider the matter and look for ways that Jordan might be able to help find a more acceptable candidate, particularly an Arab candidate. He asked that Ambassador help build support on this matter within the Jordanian government by speaking with the Foreign Minister, who will return from travel this weekend. Ambassador agreed to do so and will approach the Foreign Minister early next week.

¶3. (C) Comment: The Jordanians will now likely try to quietly gauge the extent of international support for Hosni, particularly as understood by their Ambassador to UNESCO. If support appears soft, they may then seriously consider whether to explore the willingness of other Arab states to join in searching for another Arab candidate and approaching Egypt to have Hosni step aside. End Comment.

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Beecroft